

Jeffrey Sikes

From: Jessica Hegenbart <jessica.hegenbart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, October 5, 2020 2:30 PM
To: Jeffrey Sikes; City Clerk
Cc: Wyatt Shields; Zak Bradley; Peter Noonan; Mary Gavin, Chief (FCPD); Cindy Mester; Marty Gadell; Paul Swanson; charles plymire; Robert Goff; kathyallan@starpower.net; fcnp@fcnp.com; Kristen Michael; Adam Roy; Ross Litkenhous; Letty Hardi; ross.litkenhous@gmail.com
Subject: Re: school zone safety concerns

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Mr. Sikes,

I appreciate your response. We are still a ways off (a year?) from executing any construction for the Greenway Downs project. Why can't the City execute any "quick wins" to improve child safety immediately? Street paint is relatively inexpensive compared to concrete. Like I said before, I was told "the Operations budget doesn't have \$50,000 for street paint this year." It's not in the budget because our City leadership isn't prioritizing it.

(Jeff, I know you don't control the budget, so I'm not blaming you for that)

I've been thinking about and approaching the topics of the Greenway Downs NTC Project and the School Zone issue separately because the school is not physically located within the perimeter of the Greenway Downs project. This is the first I'm hearing that they will be connected. Will this include all of the roadways and intersections around the school and not just S Oak St? I hope so.

I'm concerned about the budget for the Greenway Downs Project with this added scope. That's a huge area to be covered by a grant size of approximately \$600,000. Is the City going to supplement the grant fund to make sure there's enough money to adequately address everything that needs to be addressed?

This is also the first time I'm hearing that changes to roadways around schools need to involve the School Board, school administration, Rec and Parks, and residents. This sounds like a lot of unnecessary bureaucracy. School zone safety issues should not have to fight through a web of red tape. What exactly does that "process" look like? I sure hope that these extra entities that need to be involved don't have the ability to vote against school safety solutions.

Thank you,
Jess Hegenbart

On Friday, October 2, 2020, 05:14:40 PM EDT, Jeffrey Sikes <jsikes@fallschurchva.gov> wrote:

Ms. Hegenbart:

This is in response to your message below concerning traffic and pedestrian safety on the roadways adjacent to TJ Elementary School. You have made several suggestions for improvements to address these issues.

As you know, the City was awarded a grant for traffic calming that will be used to address traffic and pedestrian concerns on at least six Greenway Downs streets that intersect S Washington St (Route 29). Because of the proximity of this project to the school, we plan to fold all of your requests into the grant project, including the design and construction of sidewalks and roadway changes on streets around the school.

The design of roadway changes around the school will need to involve the School Board and school administration, Recreation and Parks, residents, as well as the City NTC team.

The approach to dealing with the issues you identify should take a holistic approach to include other traffic calming projects under development in the vicinity. For example, we are working with residents of nearby S Oak and S Lee Streets on a traffic calming project from W Broad to the bridge. The bridge will be replaced soon using pending State funds, and will include pedestrian improvements. These projects combined will address the entire "through" corridor between S Washington and W Broad Street.

As we have discussed, work will begin this fall on the grant funded project as staff completes work on other traffic calming projects. This work will include several engineering iterations, all involving community engagement. In the meantime, please be aware that City Council is likely to lift the hold on traffic calming funds at the October 5th Work Session to allow movement on other projects. The staff report is attached for your information.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us on safety concerns around the school. We appreciate your community engagement and your neighborhood traffic survey.

Sincerely,

Jeff Sikes

From: jessica.hegenbart@yahoo.com <jessica.hegenbart@yahoo.com>

Sent: Friday, October 2, 2020 10:28 AM

To: City Clerk <CityClerk@fallschurchva.gov>

Cc: Wyatt Shields <WShields@fallschurchva.gov>; Jeffrey Sikes <jsikes@fallschurchva.gov>; Peter Noonan <pnoonan@fccps.org>; Cindy Mester <Cmester@fallschurchva.gov>; Kristen Michael <kmichael@fccps.org>; Marty Gadell <gadellm@fccps.org>; Paul Swanson <pswanson@fccps.org>; Robert Goff <rgoff@fallschurchva.gov>; kathyallan@starpower.net; Zak Bradley <zbradley@fallschurchva.gov>; Mary Gavin, Chief (FCPD) <mgavin@fallschurchva.gov>; fcnp@fcnp.com

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City Council Members and City Staff,

I understand the City Operations budget is approximately \$900,000 over-budget. I implore you to use this money towards school-zone traffic-calming and safety measures for TJES. I live just a few doors down from TJES and witness reckless motorists incident every single day. These reckless driving incidents are occurring at a pace right back to normal levels in the past few months, despite the pandemic. (Violations include: tail-gating other motorists; tail-gating cyclists; speeding; failing to stop at stop signs; texting while driving...and the most shocking: I witnessed a motorist pass another motorist right in front of my house.)

I've discussed possible solutions with City staff, but was told it "wasn't in the budget this year." For the life of me, I cannot comprehend how a couple hundred thousand dollars can't be found for school safety. I realize we have a "process" for other traffic calming measures. But school safety measures for our children should not be tied to bureaucratic nonsense.

Below is a list of my ideas, which I've discussed with Zak Bradley and Robert Goff who both agree they are valid measures to improve the safety of the school zone. These ideas are all based on my vantage approaching the school from the south. I'm sure more safety measures would be appropriate from all other approaches.

- parking lanes on both sides of S Oak St from Parker Ave to the Seaton Lane intersection. Narrowing the driving lane of this wide portion of the street will compel motorists to slow down.

- painted stripes in front of the school on the S Oak St, indicating where the school buses stop.

- flashing "School Zone" signs from all directions approaching the school. (One exists approaching from Broad St, but that's the only one)

- additional signage indicating approved drop-off areas AND non-appropriate drop-off areas. My neighbors and I witness many motorists drop off children at the S Oak/Seaton intersection adding to the already very busy intersection and causing undo safety risk.

- re-design the intersection at S Marshall/Seaton Ln/S Oak St. I think this is a perfect intersection for raised crosswalks. This intersection is dangerous and too big by today's engineering standards. The driving path must be narrowed via concrete bump-outs/chokers. This will also increase the likelihood of motorists coming to a complete stop at the stop signs.

We all know our City and surrounding area is plagued by aggressive motorists who have no regard for public safety and quality of life for residents who love the alleged "walkability" of our "Little City". We can't fix everything over-night, but these should be easy fixes.

It's been about a year since my son was almost hit by a motorist while crossing the street walking to school. You all have heard from me many times since then. To this day, the City has done nothing to improve the TJES school zone besides new light bulbs in one school zone sign. You all have told me that "walkability" and "safety" are important to you, but I'm not seeing any proof of that. Are you waiting for another child to get hit by a car before you act (as happened on West St)?